

IRS News Release

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Avoid Common Mistakes When Filing Your Tax Return

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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today reminded taxpayers to review their tax returns for common errors that could result in delayed refunds.

Here are some ways to avoid common tax return errors.

File electronically. If you e-file or Free File, tax software will do the calculations, flag common errors and prompt you for missing information.

Remember Making Work Pay. [The Making Work Pay tax credit](#) — available in 2009 and 2010 — is worth up to \$400 for individuals and \$800 for married couples. Most people got it as a reduction to their paycheck withholding. Form 1040 filers must complete [Schedule M](#), attach it to their returns, and claim the credit to benefit from it. (Tax software handles these calculations automatically for e-filers.) Also, if you received the one-time [Economic Recovery Payment](#), you need to reduce your Making Work Pay credit by that amount. Taxpayers who are not certain whether they received the economic recovery payment can find out with the help of an online tool, [Did I Receive a 2009 Economic Recovery Payment?](#) If you don't have access to the IRS Web site, call 866-234-2942.

Claiming the Homebuyer Credit? If you claim the first-time homebuyer credit, complete [Form 5405](#), and include it along with the settlement document, such as a HUD-1. More information is available on the homebuyer page at irs.gov/recovery.

Use the peel-off label if you mail a paper return. Paper filers may line through and make corrections right on the label. Be sure to fill in your Social Security number in the box provided on the return. If you do not have a peel-off label, fill in all requested information clearly, including Social Security numbers.

Check only one filing status. Also, check the appropriate exemption boxes. When you enter Social Security numbers, make sure they are correct.

Double check all figures. While software catches and prevents many errors on e-file returns, math errors remain common on paper returns.

Get the Right Routing and Account Numbers. Make sure the financial institution routing and account numbers you have entered on the return for direct deposit of your refund are accurate. Incorrect numbers can cause your refund to be delayed or deposited into the wrong account.

Sign and date the return. If you are filing a joint return, both you and your spouse must sign and date the return. E-filers can sign using a self-selected personal identification number (PIN).

Attach Forms To the Front of the Return. Paper filers need to attach W-2s and other forms that reflect tax withholding, as well as other necessary forms and schedules, to the front of their returns.

Do you owe tax? If so, a number of [e-payment](#) options are available. Or send a check or money order payable to the “United States Treasury.”